

THE MARSH BERKELEY EXTENDS
RIVETING ACCOUNT OF 80'S EAST OAKLAND
PEARL LOUISE'S
**PASS THE NAILS AND
SHAME THE DEVIL**

Written & Performed by Pearl Louise
Directed by David Ford
April 25 – May 23, 2026

BERKELEY, CA (22 April 2026) — By popular demand, **The Marsh Berkeley** will extend the engagement of **Pearl Louise's** debut solo tour de force *Pass the Nails and Shame the Devil*. This autobiographical work directed by **David Ford** traces young Pearl's eye-opening journey from the bayous of Louisiana to the East Bay in the 1980's, where her undeterrable parents set out to build a duplex in a neighborhood burdened with the afflictions of the crack epidemic. Rooted in hope, promise, and fierce determination, the piece explores how a Black family forged stability and belonging in a new area strained by persistent, often violent pressures. Through the eyes of young Pearl, her strong-willed mother and steadfast father transform a construction site into a home, aided by a motley crew of men whose labor, humor, and humanity reveal the power of community and collective resilience. *Pass the Nails and Shame the Devil* plays **4:00pm Saturdays, April 25 – May 23, 2026** at **The Marsh Berkeley** (2120 Allston Way, Berkeley). For tickets (\$25-\$35 sliding scale general admission, \$50 and \$100 reserved, plus a \$3 convenience fee per ticket) or more information, the public may visit themarsh.org.

Stephanie Weisman, founder and artistic director of The Marsh, expressed her enthusiasm for this work, noting, "The Marsh is thrilled to launch another important work that not only engage audiences in a roaring good time, but also expands their understanding of local history, and even

spreads some hope about what's possible when one family is determined to raise up a struggling area."

A recipient of The Marsh's newest development commitment, The Marsh Sparkle Initiative, *Pass the Nails and Shame the Devil* received hands-on rehearsal time with an invested creative team to aid its development. The show received extensive development support through The Marsh's new work pipeline, first presented as a Marsh Rising performance before entering rehearsals for its world premiere run this Spring. Called "a love letter" which "lands beautifully" by *Theatrius*, *Pass the Nails and Shame the Devil* offers a compassionate and honest view into Oakland's culture during one of its most trying times.

ABOUT THE CAST AND CREATIVES

Pearl Louise (*Playwright, Performer*) is a Bay Area performance artist and mother whose works have been seen at the Fresno Fringe Show, San Francisco's Stage Werx Theatre, and The Marsh. She has performed two solo pieces with The Formerly Incarcerated People's Performance Project (FIPPP), which led to a series of performances at Berkeley Repertory Theatre.

David Ford (*Director*) has been collaborating on new and unusual theater for three decades and has been associated with The Marsh for most of that time. The San Francisco press has variously called him "the solo performer maven," "the monologue maestro," "the dean of solo performance," and "the solo performer's best friend." A week rarely goes by when residents of the Bay Area cannot enjoy one of his productions. Collaborators include Geoff Hoyle, Brian Copeland, Charlie Varon, Echo Brown, Marilyn Pittman, Rebecca Fisher, Wayne Harris, Jill Vice, and Marga Gomez. Ford's work has been seen regionally at The Public Theater, Second Stage Theater, Theatre at St. Clement's, Dixon Place, Theatre for the New City (New York), Highways Performance Space (Los Angeles), and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Co. (Washington, D.C.). His work has also been featured in most of the fringe festivals in North America, and at theaters around the Bay Area including Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Magic Theatre, and Marin Theatre. Ford's directing has garnered several "Best of Fringe" Awards and a Goldie Award.

ABOUT THE MARSH

The Marsh is known as "a breeding ground for new performance." Launched in 1989 by Founder and Artistic Director Stephanie Weisman, it annually hosts more than 500 performances across the company's two venues in San Francisco and Berkeley. A leading outlet for solo performers, The Marsh's specialty has been hailed by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as "solo performances that celebrate the power of storytelling at its simplest and purest." *The East Bay Times* named The Marsh one of the Bay Area's best intimate theaters, calling it "one of the most thriving solo theaters in the nation. The live theatrical energy is simply irresistible." In April 2020, The Marsh launched its digital platform MarshStream and hosted more than 700 live streams which provided 300 performers and its youth class participants a platform to continue

discovering, developing, and producing art during the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown. Today, The Marsh presents both in-person live performances and content on its MarshStream, continuing to expand its reach to audiences onsite and around the world. The Marsh believes in the power of people's storytelling and has several classes for the public to create their own works as well as through its developing work performance series: Monday Night Marsh, Tell It on Tuesday, and Marsh Risings. The theater company also collaborates with over 20 San Francisco public schools providing a year-round youth program serving students at its theater and in the classrooms.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

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WHEN: April 25 - May 23 2026

SHOWS: 4:00pm Saturdays

WHERE: **The Marsh Berkeley, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley, CA 94704**
Parking: Allston Way Garage, 2061 Allston Way between Milvia & Shattuck.
BART station (closest): Downtown Berkeley BART

TICKETS: \$25-\$35 general admission, \$50 and \$100 reserved, \$3 convenience fee per ticket

INFO: For information, the public may visit themarsh.org.

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PRESS: Contact Raymond Harris, CBCO Public Relations & Marketing
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PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here:
<https://cbpr.co/press/passthenails>